



Virginia Beach VA250 Committee

Meeting Minutes

Approved April 10, 2025

13 March 2025, 5:30 PM

Department of Planning and Community Development Conference Room
2875 Sabre Street, Suite 500

ATTENDEES:

Members:

James B. Wood, Chair; Chris Pieczynski, Vice Chair; Bobbie Gribble, Secretary

C. Drummond Ball, Linda Carrington (6:30), Robert Dozier, Sharon Felton, Patrick Hannum, Kevin Kattwinkel, Becky Livas, Lee Lockamy, Bobby Melatti, Michael Winner

Council Liaison: Worth Remick

Staff Liaison: Mark Reed

Public: Florence Reese

Welcome

Chair Jimmy Wood called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He welcomed all committee members, City Council members, and members of the public.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2025

Mr. Wood called for the approval of the minutes of the January 9, 2025 meeting. Drummond Ball made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Sharon Felton seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The January 9, 2025 minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

February Event Recaps

Mr. Wood said the VB VA250 Committee supported several events in February, and he asked for a brief report on each. He asked Chris Pieczynski to start with a report on the Andrew Lawler presentation.



Mr. Pieczynski said Mr. Lawler presented on his book, *A Perfect Frenzy: A Royal Governor, His Black Allies, and the Crisis that Spurred the American Revolution*. The presentation was held on February 3 in the Miller Studio at Sandler Center. He said around ninety people attended and the venue was the right size for the audience we had. It was a worthwhile use of the committee's funds. Mr. Pieczynski said quite a few books were sold at the event.

Mr. Reed said thirty-one books were sold at \$30 per book. He said the VB VA250 Committee purchased the books at fifty percent of the cost, plus shipping. All of the sales proceeds went toward preservation of the Cape Henry Lighthouse. Mr. Reed said Preservation Virginia employees from the Cape Henry Lighthouse sold the book during the event.

Mr. Pieczynski said we were the first in Virginia to host Mr. Lawler's presentation on this book. He will be speaking at Great Bridge in September and will sign books. He will also be at MacArthur Memorial in July.

Mr. Wood asked Sharon Felton to report on the Willis Augustus Hodges historical marker unveiling ceremony. Ms. Felton said the historical marker for Willis Augustus Hodges was unveiled Saturday, February 8th at the New Jerusalem Ministries in Kempsville.

Ms. Felton said there were 125 people in attendance. The keynote speaker was Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander, a professor at Norfolk State University (NSU). The VB VA250 Committee supported her appearance by providing a \$1,000 donation to the NSU Foundation in place of an honorarium.

Ms. Felton said she mentioned the VB VA250 Committee several times during the event. She told the committee members how much the VB VA250 group means to her. She said at the most recent School Board meeting it was suggested that all commemorative events and mentions be removed. Ms. Felton said she thought about the work of the VB VA250 Committee and spoke against this idea. She said she stressed that the VB VA250 Committee does a lot of work to commemorate historic events.

Mr. Wood asked Pat Hannum to report on the Skirmish at James's Plantation commemoration event. Dr. Hannum said the event was held on February 15 and was a success. He said the event was held in the Nimmo Church and Fellowship Hall. He noted that the VB VA250 Committee provided the \$350 rental fee for use of the Fellowship Hall.

Dr. Hannum said the event was sponsored by the Great Bridge and Norfolk SARs plus the DAR. He said he spoke about the Skirmish and had recreated maps so the attendees could envision the progression of the skirmish. He noted that there were between 50 to 60 attendees and many members of the VB VA250 Committee attended.

Council Member Worth Remick said he accepted a Certificate of Appreciation from the SAR and DAR chapters presented to the Virginia Beach VA250 Committee at the event. He read the Certificate of Appreciation and handed it to City Staff Liaison Mark Reed.



FY25 Budget

Mr. Wood asked Mr. Reed to talk about the Committee's FY25 budget. Mr. Reed said that at the January VB VA250 meeting, Vice Chair Christi Lyons had asked to see an accounting of funds so committee members could track the expenditures and know what funds we may have available. Mr. Reed had provided a list of expenditures in the meeting packet (see Appendix 1) and he briefly reviewed it.

Old Business

Under Old Business, Mr. Wood noted that Mr. Pieczynski has a couple of items to address.

Mr. Pieczynski said the first item is sponsorship of the Run to Remember event taking place on Memorial Day in 2025 at the Military Aviation Museum. He said the 2025 Sponsorship is \$2,500. With the sponsorship you get 4 places in the run. More importantly, the graphic design for VB VA250 will be placed on the t-shirt, which is given to every runner that participates.

Mr. Pieczynski said the Committee had previously approved \$2,000 to be an event sponsor. That amount was the Sustainer Level for last year's race. The cost of the Sustainer Level has increased to \$2,500 this year. Mr. Pieczynski made a motion to approve increasing the funding amount to \$2,500 to participate at the Sustainer Level. Lee Lockamy seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

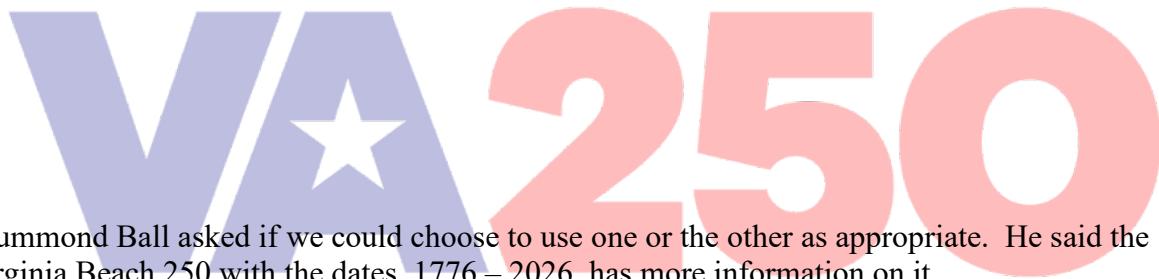
Mr. Pieczynski said the second item is the Independence Day Run taking place on July 4, 2025 at Mt. Trashmore. He said he contacted the YMCA, which is producing the run, about event sponsorships. They would love for us to partner with them. Mr. Pieczynski said he is recommending a Gold Level sponsorship, which is \$2,500. He said we can have a banner along the racecourse or the finish line. Our graphic design will also be placed on the race t-shirt and all marketing materials.

Mr. Pieczynski made a motion to sponsor the 2025 YMCA Independence Day Run at Mt. Trashmore for \$2,500. Lee Lockamy seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Reed said he needed some clarification on the use of the Virginia Beach VA250 graphic design since we have two designs. He noted that one design we had created for us by a design firm and the other was made for us by the VA250 Commission. As we move forward with sponsoring events and purchasing items to give to the public, Mr. Reed said we should have an understanding about which graphic to use.

Mr. Wood stated he felt we should use the VA250 design for event sponsorships. He said part of our mission is to raise awareness about and show support for the larger VA250 effort and identity.

Michael Winner pointed out that on the smaller items, such as pens, the logo we had designed will be difficult to read, where the VA250 Commission designed one would be better.



Drummond Ball asked if we could choose to use one or the other as appropriate. He said the Virginia Beach 250 with the dates, 1776 – 2026, has more information on it.

Mr. Reed said using the VA250 Commission made design for sponsored events is a good approach. For other items he thought either logo could be chosen. Sometimes we could use both, such as on a banner. Mr. Wood said Mr. Reed will be designated to choose which design should be used for the non-event uses.

Mr. Reed then discussed the distribution of the additional copies of Andrew Lawler's book to school and public libraries. He said the VB VA250 Committee purchased 48 books and 31 were sold at the event. He said he has set one aside for Dr. Mansfield to purchase, so we have 16 on hand.

Mr. Reed asked Ms. Felton how many high schools there are. Ms. Felton responded that there are 11. Ms. Felton said that there is an advisory committee that reviews new books. Mr. Reed asked Ms. Felton to coordinate with the advisory body on review of *A Perfect Frenzy* with the plan to donate one to each of the high school libraries.. Mr. Reed said he will check with the public libraries about donation of the additional five copies.

New Business

Under New Business, Kevin Kattwinkel reported on the Virginia Musical Theater (VMT) and its planned presentation of *1776* in February 2026. He said VMT will need to raise funds for the production. The play will cost \$250,000 to produce. He was asked by the staff of the Virginia Musical Theater how much they should request from the VB VA250 Committee. Mr. Reed said they should ask for between \$5,000 to \$10,000 for this fiscal year. He said they should note what it is for, such as wardrobe.

Mr. Kattwinkel said the Virginia Musical Theater puts on 4 shows a year at the Sandler Center. They have a permanent staff and use local talent, plus they bring in outside professional talent for their productions.

Promotional items

Michael Winner presented some examples of the types of promotional items we might purchase to give away at events. He suggested purchasing 250 as a minimum. We can put one of the two graphic designs on the items, whichever would look best. Mr. Winner said the firm he is gathering information from is a SWAM firm, which makes City purchasing more streamlined.

Mr. Wood asked Mr. Winner to put together a list of promotional items to purchase that he would recommend and the cost. He would present it at the next meeting.

Mr. Wood made a motion for the VB VA250 Committee to allocate \$750 towards promotional items in addition to the \$500 previously approved for the stickers and magnets. Mr. Winner was



appointed as the point person to make recommendations and collaborate with Mr. Reed on the purchases.

Chris Pieczynski seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. Wood suggested with pens we might get multi-colored imprints so the design will show up better. Becky Livas asked where all of these items would be needed. The response was they would be used as give-a-ways at the events we are supporting.

The motion was called and passed unanimously.

Mr. Reed said the Planning Department office move date has been set for May 1. He said our last meeting in this space will be the April meeting. Mr. Reed said he still has not gotten an answer yet about what do we will do in the new location with meetings after 5:00 p.m. Any meeting after 5:00 p.m. will likely require security. Mr. Reed said he is not sure how this will work.

Mr. Ball asked about the VA250 Mobile Museum that is supposed to be traveling around the state. Mr. Reed said they have made it complicated to get, with multiple signatures required on the application, contracts for the visit, and the location paying for accommodations for the crew. He said it has to be in a location that can accommodate a large tractor trailer that will open up on two sides.

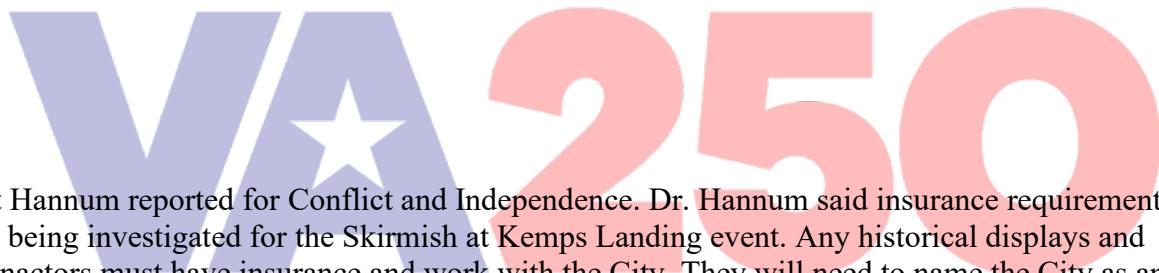
Mr. Reed said it was supposed to visit Landstown Middle School this week, but after VBCPS attorneys required a certificate of insurance, that visit was canceled. Mr. Reed said he will try to work out getting the Mobile Museum here for the Skirmish at Kemps Landing event. He said it could be located in the parking lot of City Park or nearby Tallwood Elementary School.

Florence Reese said she is researching militia officers and has gone through the court minutes and extracted 70 to 80 patriot names from Princess Anne County that served in the militia unit. She would like to put a plaque together. She has gone through the list twice. In 1781 there are no court minutes. Ms. Reese felt the courts were closed. At the next meeting she will bring a cost. She is anticipating it will be about \$4,000. Jimmy Wood suggested this should be sent to the Conflict and Independence subcommittee for review and presentation.

Subcommittee Meetings/Reports

Mr. Wood then asked the subcommittees to convene to discuss business and to come back to the committee at 7:00 p.m. The VB VA250 Committee reconvened, and the subcommittees reported out.

Conflict and Independence



Pat Hannum reported for Conflict and Independence. Dr. Hannum said insurance requirements are being investigated for the Skirmish at Kemps Landing event. Any historical displays and reenactors must have insurance and work with the City. They will need to name the City as an additional insured party that day.

Dr. Hannum said the Battle of the Virginia Capes commemoration will take place on September 6, 2025, and will be a big deal this year. The Supreme Allied Commander Transformation is French, and he will raise the visibility of the day. He is 4-star Admiral Pierre Vandier and if he is there, he might be the keynote speaker. The state SAR Liaison is currently working on coordinating with the French.

Dr. Hannum said Mayor Dyer received a letter asking for the sign for the Battle of the Virginia Capes to be relocated to a more visible location. It is currently located by the Brock Environmental Center. It has a lot of graphics and verbiage. Dr. Hannum said he will take a look at the sign, and initiate coordination with the interested parties, such as the Superintendent of the Colonial National Historical Park. He will work on developing recommendations.

Dr. Hannum said there is a John Ackiss plaque at Kemps Landing behind Pleasant Hall. Ackiss is the only named individual that died at the Skirmish of Kemps Landing in 1775. Dr. Hannum said he still has family members in the area. One of the members is researching the family land. He has found what he thinks is the family cemetery. He has done impressive work. Dr. Hannum said they are looking to see if there is a more appropriate location for the plaque.

Civil Liberties and Rights and Indigenous Peoples

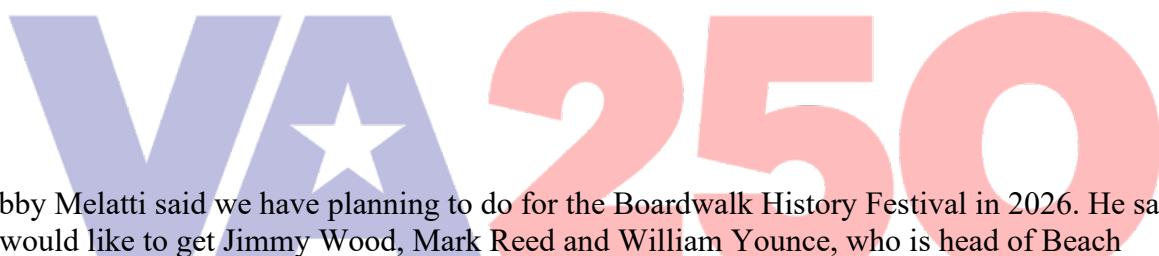
Ms. Felton reported for the two committees. She said we need to start to identify groups to participate in the Boardwalk History Festival in 2026. She said everyone agreed to start putting together a list and to reach out to some of the groups the committee members know.

Ms. Felton asked if we need a form letter of who we are and what we need. It will be a form letter of awareness and what is needed for the commitment. Mr. Wood asked Ms. Felton to get with Mr. Reed about what should be in this letter.

Council Member Remick suggested we consider students on the VB VA250 Committee. Ms. Felton said she will ask Christi Lyons if she can provide guidance based on the Student Leaders Committee from the Virginia Beach Historic Preservation Commission.

Linda Carrington said she is having an event called *Tell My Story* about Burton Station. It will be on March 22 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Senior Services Center.

Events



Bobby Melatti said we have planning to do for the Boardwalk History Festival in 2026. He said he would like to get Jimmy Wood, Mark Reed and William Younce, who is head of Beach Events, and go to lunch to talk about expectations and identify the appropriate people and groups. Together, they will create a guideline of what the event will look like. Council Member Remick suggested Thomas Jefferson should be played by Clay Jenkinson.

Mr. Melatti said the key is to know the expectations of Beach Events and how they segway into events, for example 4th of July. Mr. Melatti said he met with Rob Cross and they will use Virginia Symphony as the Orchestra of choice for the 4th of July. With the Beach Events, nothing is free - there is a cost. We need to identify what we need and develop a realistic budget.

For example, the 4th of July is a hybrid. They have \$200,000 that is put into the fireworks. If there is anything "extra" in lights and fireworks that is requested, it will cost more money. However the budget is constructed, Mr. Melatti said Beach Events will provide a quality experience.

Mr. Wood said the budget is a more complicated question. He thinks there is an appetite for the Council to do more things with the 250th celebration.

Adjournment

Mr. Wood said the next meeting of the VB VA250 Committee will be on April 10 at 5:30 p.m. Mr. Wood adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.



Appendix 1

FY25 Budget and Expenditures – As of March 13, 2025

Virginia Beach VA250 Committee

Appropriated Budget – 100.204.1110.605520.10850 Total – \$ 60,000

Budget Transfer to Cultural Affairs \$ 10,000

Expenditures

- **Battle of the Virginia Capes – tents, chairs, portables \$ 3,700**
- **Rental of Miller Studio at Sandler Center 2.03.25 \$ 1,320**
- **Presentation and Book signing – Andrew Lawler \$ 1,461.20**
- **Book Purchase – A Perfect Frenzy by Andrew Lawler \$ 804**
- **VB VA250 Design Graphic \$ 550**
- **Willis Augustus Hodges Marker unveiling – facility rental \$ 1,000**
- **Willis Augustus Hodges Marker unveiling – honorarium \$ 1,000**
- **Skirmish at James's Plantation \$ 350**
- **Nansemond Indian Nation Pow Wow May 17 \$ 10,500**
- **VA250 Conference – Staff Attendance \$ 719.64**

Total Expenditures \$ 21,404.84

Balance \$28,595.16

Other Expenditures approved by the VB VA250 Committee

- **VB VA250 Stickers/Magnets \$ 500**
- **Run to Remember sponsorship \$ 2,000**

Planned Contracted Manpower for event planning, promotion \$ 17,500